

PARENTAL LEAVE GUIDELINES

On March 27, 1987, the General Assembly Council adopted Section 19.10, *Parental Leave*, as an amendment to its Personnel Policies. It recommended that this policy be used as a guideline for synods, presbyteries and sessions in establishing their own parental leave policies. Several of the Presbyteries within the Synod of Lincoln Trails have recently adopted similar policies, as have many of the industries in the area. Careful consideration of such a policy will demonstrate that the arrival of a new person into the church family invariably provides an opportunity for growth, even though at first glance it might appear as a hardship. Upon recommendation of the Committee on Ministry, the Presbytery of Whitewater Valley has adopted the following guidelines concerning Parental Leave.

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In recognition and support of the church's commitment to family life and to the importance of early bonding with a child by both mother and father, and further, in order to enhance the covenant relationship between a pastor and his/her congregation by incorporating this significant event into the life of the congregations, the following guidelines are established by the Presbytery of Whitewater Valley to aid sessions in developing their own personnel policies. The session's parental leave policy (in whatever form) will then be incorporated into the terms of call. Limited financial assistance may be available on a shared basis to assist churches in implementing a parental leave policy.

The following components describe what shall be known as **parental leave**:

- 1. Maternity Leave up to six weeks following the birth of the child with full salary, housing and benefits
- 2. Paternity Leave up to two weeks following the birth of the child with full salary, housing and benefits
- 3. Adoptive Leave up to six weeks following the arrival of the child, with full salary, housing and benefits
- 4. Extended Leave (beyond the above) if due to health complications, shall be considered and treated as disability leave
- 5. Extended Leave (beyond the above) if **not** due to health complications, shall be negotiated between each minister and her/his employer

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Implementation

- 1. Upon Presbytery adoption of this Parental Leave policy recommendation, the Committee on Ministry will inform all churches of this policy, emphasizing that the Parental Leave Policy in the session's personnel policies should apply to existing pastoral relationships as well as new calls.
- 2. The Committee on Ministry will check for inclusion of a parental leave policy in Church Information Forms.
- 3. The Committee on Ministry will ask about a church's policy on parental leave at the interview with the PNC and minister/candidate.